

8 779  
P E T E R S  
E N L A R G E M E N T  
V P O N T H E P R A Y E R S  
O F T H E C H V R C H.

B R  
M a s t e r H A R R I S.

Pfal. 34. 17.

*The Righteous cry, and the Lord heareth and  
deliuereth them out of all their troubles.*

---



---

L O N D O N  
Printed by I. D. for Iohn Bartlett, and are to  
be sould at the golden Cupp in the Gold-  
smiths Rowe in Cheapside.

1 6 2 4.

LETTERS  
 ENTANGLEMENT  
 UPON THE PRAYERS  
 OF THE CHURCH

BY  
 MARY HARRIS

London: Printed by J. D. for John Bunting and are to  
 be found at the Golden Cup in the Gold-  
 smiths House in Chancery.

LONDON  
 Printed by J. D. for John Bunting and are to  
 be found at the Golden Cup in the Gold-  
 smiths House in Chancery.  
 1825



# PETERS ENLARGEMENT.

Acts 12. 6. 7.

*And when Herod would haue brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two souldiers, bound with two chaines; and the Keepers before the doore, kept the prison.*

*And behold the Angell of the Lord came vpon him, and a light shined in the prison: and hee smote Peter on the side, and raised him vp, saying; Arise vp quickly, And his chaines, fell off from his hands, &c.*



HERE is a storie of *Peters*,  
1. Imprisonment. 2. En-  
largement: With the  
cause of the one, and  
meanes of the other. *He-*  
*rod* having vexed some,  
slaine a second, now com-  
mits the third; and all  
this to gratifie the Iewes.

*Peter* thus committed, is bailed by the Church, or  
rather remooved and freed by petition; they pray  
heartily for him, in the 5. verse, and they speed as  
happily

B

happily, whilst they are praying, God gives in the prisoner amongst them. The manner of his delivery is here reported, and that was very strange, beyond *Herods* purpose, the prisoners expectation, the Keepers meaning, all mens hopes: *Herod* held his purpose hee had begun, and the next morning hee meant an end of him, *Peter* had made his conclusion to morrow (thinks he) (for messages past betweene him and the Church, which spent this night in prayer for him, and therefore knew the danger) I must be put to it, therefore I will strengthen my selfe to night: The Keepers stood vpon their guard, and resolved that no *Peter* should passe them; yet is *Peter* delivred, and how I pray you? God remoues all impediments, for nothing was in readinesse.

First, for man, entrance was there none, therefore God sends an Angell, and there was no stop against him.

Next, in the dark, it was hard to finde which was which, God directs an Angell to him, and hee comes vpon him, and misses not the man, though bound to the same chaine with two others, as in strict imprisonments they vsed to doe.

Thirdly, they were in the darke, and that was ill for noyse; The Angell brings his darke lanthorn with him, and shines to *Peter* and none else.

Fourthly, the Prisoner can doe little for himself, hee is asleepe, the Angell wakes him; hee is laid, the Angell raises him; he is amazed, the Angell directs him; hee is bound, the Angell unties him; hee knowes not where he is, the Angell guides him; hee

is

*Peters Enlargement.*

is to passe through sundry *difficulties*, the Angell *conducts* him through them all, and so dismisses him.

Wee will vse no more words about a plaine storie, but acquaint you with our meditations: they containe the successe of the Churches prayers, *they prayed for Peter*, the Angell thereupon is sent to *Peter*: where see; 1. *How the Angell findes him*: 2. *How the Angell delivers him*.

For the first, hee findes him *sleeping*, in the midst of feares and foes: From whence was this sleepe, was it wordly sorrow that caused it, or was it carnall security?

*Ans.* In doubtfull things charity supposes the best; so should wee, worldly sorrow causes sleepe, but how? when it is not extreame, and that sleepe is ioyned with starting: carnall security will cause sleepe, but why should we charge *Peter* with that at this time; his sleepe came from a better cause, he was at peace with God, he had the Churches prayers for him, the cause for him, his conscience for him, God and his Angels for him; hee could die but once, and for one death hee was prepared: hence his boldnes before, Chapters 4. and 5. hence his confidence, here he resolved with *David*, *I will lay more downe and sleepe*, and with all, God gaue rest to his beloved, as it is in the *Psalmes*, rest more then ordinary to his minde, to his body: hence the Angell can hardly awake him, and being awaked hee is not terrified, as a guilty person would haue beene in this case: doe then but consider, 1. The man. 2. His behaviour in like cases. 3. The time and circum-

circumstances. 4. The exercises of the Church for him. 5. The messenger, and message sent to him. 6. The manner of his behaviour when hee is awakened, and you will see that his sleepe grew not from dislemper, but from strength of faith and comfort.

Now to the points.

*Doct. I.*

*Ely 33.*

Where first from the order, see the power of ioynt prayers, they beare downe all before them, and prevaile in heaven and earth, as the word that comes from heaven, prospers in the thing whereunto it is sent; so the word that goes to heaven, the prayers of the Church strike vp to God, there they lie at his gates, and never will away without their errand, and when they are answered, then they come downe with authority and raigne over all impediments below, witnesse this story: *Peter* is committed, the persecuters are resolute, the foes many, the friends few, meanes none but God, to God the Church goes; the enemies plotte, the Church prayes, they shut the prison doores, the Church opens heavens doores, so ther's old tugging for the prisoner, but the Church winnes him. God, to let them see what prayers bee, sends him to them while they are praying; there, saith God (if you will take no denyall) there hee is; thereby pointing vs to the meanes of his deliverance: we need not many words for proof of this, *James* saith, *The prayer of one righteous man prevailes much*; if of one, what of twenty! what of an hundred! and he instances in *Elijah*, *Hee alone could open and shut heaven*, then well may many open and shut prisons on earth; nay adde further, the ioynt prayers of

*James 5.*

vn-

# Peters Enlargement.

vnbelievers and hypocrites haue done much, when heathenish *Ninivie* fasted and prayed, God heard; Jonah 3. when false *Rehoboam* humbled himselfe and his people, God was intreated; how much more shall the faithfull prayers of the Church preuaile, preuaile (I say) both for the preventing and removing evils, and obtaining and keeping of good things: What shall we instance the life of *Asa*, *Iehosaphat*, *Hezekiah*, when was it otherwise, when did the Church of God ever ioyne in a common petition to God but they sped? no instance to the contrary. 2 Chron. 12.

No marvell, this exercise is well grounded and warranted, it hath the warrant of a precept: 1. *Pray for one another, call vpon me.* Reas. 1. James 5.

2. The warrant of a promise, *I will deliuer thee.* Psalme 50.

3. The warrant of experience, never any yet vfed it but they preuailed.

Prayers are presents very welcome to God, hee prefers them to all sacrifices, being immediate worshipps of his Maiestie, Let me heare thy voyce it is pleasant: No ffather loues the voyce of his children, like as God loues the voyce of his Church, 1. John 1. 14. tis his musicke and perfume. Rev. 5. 8.

3. The parties are very deare who tender them, God loues his Church aboue all creatures, he gaue his Sonne for her, and therefore her suites shal haue acceptance: *Let me see thy face, its comely*; *Ester* neuer pleased *Ahasuerus* so well, as the Church pleaseth Christ. Reas. 3. Cant. 2. 14.

4. The parties from and through whom they are presented, please: They are indited and abbetted by the holy Ghost, *Rom. 8.* tendred by Christ Reas. 4. Rom. 8. Iesus

Iesus, and shall these be denyed? adde to this:

5. The party to whom they are directed, to God, who is all truth, mercy, grace, wisdom, power, and shall not these prevaile? prayers set God on worke, and all in God, his wisdom, his power, his Angels, and what then can hinder?

*Vse 1.*

Looke backward, and call to minde your sinne this day, see, many a *Peter* hath been in prison, and prayers were not made by the Church; many a member sicke, and prayers were not made by the Elders; yea many a Church distressed, *Bohemia* afflicted, the *Palatinate* and *Valstoline* distressed, yet wee did not pray; the enemy could curse, but wee did not pray, and therefore how iustly might God distresse and leaue vs destitute of his helpe, and the Churches prayers?

2. Look forward, & preserve & improve this your interest in God, let no *Peter*, no Preacher, no Christian, no neighbour lie in the chaines by you (whether in the chaines of sicknesse, or poverty, or debt, or paine, or sinne, or temptation) but doe you retriue him, you have a key that will open any locke, a medicine that will heale any wound, a weapon that will prevaile in any place; draw this weapon, vse this medicine, if men be sicke, pray them whole; if poore, pray them rich; if sad, pray them merry.

But is this so easily done? yes verily, by the whole Church; as it is for the outward estate when one is very poore, it is hard for two or three to set him vp againe, but nothing for a thousand; and when one is in a pit it is much for one, but not for many



many to pull him out: see here, it is long of vs that men lie so long vnder their burdens, would wee ioyntly commend them to God, our prayers would take, mens chaines would off, true spirituall chaines: Why if so, were it not worth the while; what, may we ease our brethren of temptations, of passions, of lusts, and will wee not? But for outward crosses, saith not Saint *Iames*, that the prayers of the Church heale the sicke; saith not the story, the prayers of the Church procured *Peters* liberty: But say they bee not alwayes delivered: yet it is good to get the crosses mitigated, sanctified, sweetened, and something will be done if wee pray; doe this then or nothing: perhaps you will excuse other negligences, you would visit your sicke neighbour, but you question his disease, your welcome; you would relieue your poore neighbours, but you haue it not; why there is no Christian man but he hath an interest in God, a spirit of prayer; list vp a prayer for thy brethren, if thou canst doe nothing else, and this will doe thee and him good, prayer in this case for others, is a cleerer evidence of grace, then for our selves,

Here is comfort and encouragement, comfort for our selues, if members of the Church, if wee bleed with her, if wee pray for her, if wee say, *If I forget thee, O Ierusalem, then let my right hand forget her cunning*: the comfort is great, wee haue that which Saint *Paul* thirsted for, the prayers of the Church, and this is a priuiledge worth ten worlds, and a comfort beyond all apprehension, when a man lookes round about him and can say, there is

Ob.

Ans.

Ob.

Ans.

a towne, I haue some prayers there, there is another, I haue stocke going there, nay in every shire, every nation, some that bee enlarged when I am barren, some quickened when I am dull, and I am an adventurer in the Churches shippe, I haue a stocke in her treasure, and an interest in her prayers, this keepe the head aboue water, and preserues from sinking.

4. For encouragement, to pray for the Church, would Gods people enter into a holy league, and tye themselves in their severall closets, to spend so much time weekly, or dayly in prayer, for some particular person, or place, Church, or Nation; I wonder how they should misse; tell mee where ever the Churches ioynt prayers did ever mis-carry, or proue abortiue; in what place, in what case, for what people? prayers haue beene made for men out of the Church, and haue sped, witnesse *Ninivie*; for men in the Church (good men, bad men) and haue sped; prayers haue beene made by Land, and haue prevailed; on the Seas by *Jonah*, and haue sped; they haue prevailed vnder the earth, in dens, and dungeons, and caues; prayers haue been made for sicke men and haue holpe them, for dying men, for poore men, for captiues, for prisoners, and haue holpen; for men against persecution, against temptation, against sorrow, against beasts, against men, against diuels: prayers haue beene omnipotent heretofore, why not now?

*Ob.*

*Ob.* Why now, if we were as others, Gods hand (wee knowe) is not shortened, his care not heauie, but our sinnes, our crying ripe sinnes, hinder good things from vs?

*Ans.*

*Ans.* Why therefore set against those finnes by prayer, cast out your owne, cry downe other mens, out-cry them.

*Ans.*

*Ob.* Oh but they cry loud.

*Ob.*

*Ans.* Yet prayer hath the stronger voyce, the blood of Christ speakes better things then bloody sins, &c. Let *Sodome* yeeld ten holy men, and she shall bee spared, let one *Elijah* stand vp for stiffe-necked *Israell*, and one *Amos* plead for rebellious *Iudah*, and God will shew mercy.

*Ans.*

Gen. 18.  
James 5.  
Amos 7. 1. 2.

*Ob.* True indeed, if we had such as they, but our prayers are weake and faint.

*Ob.*

*Ans.* 1. They were men subiect to like passions.

*Ans.*

2. The prayer of the righteous is prevailing. 3. These here mentioned were new converts, yet prevailed with God for *Peter*.

3. Iam. 5. 16. 17.

*Ob.* Oh but here the whole Church ioyned: If all *Israell* might meet from *Dan* to *Beerseba*, there might be some hope.

*Ob.*

*Ans.* We may, and doe more then these might;

*Ans.*

1. we may meet in publique assemblies euery Sabbath: 2. these were but few that lived in the dark, and met in the night, and in *Hesters* time in their severall families, and the whole State was then against the truth, and against the Scriptures, and all religion was disgraced; yet then they prevailed, much more we now.

*Ob.* But now it is too late, many Churches abroad be quite scattered, many men at home haue their backs and hearts quite broken, with wants, temptations, discouragements.

*Ob.*

*Ans.* Whilest God calls in his word, it is not too

*Ans.*

*Peters Enlargement.*

late, God is vsed to see men sinking before hee sets in, their extremity is his opportunity, when *Peter* is within one night of the sword, then is his time.

*Ob.*

*Ans.*

But I haue waited, & see no successe. *Ans.* So did the Church, they pray for *Peter* this weeke, the next, and the next, the doores bee still shut, the chaines bee still on; well now they haue but one night more to waite, they waite that, but ere morning all is wonne: If then wee haue but one day, one night, one houre to spend; hope, pray, waite, that day, that night, that houre, God will be seene in the mount: deliverance shall come if prayer goe on the errand; it ever was so, ever shall be so, dispute not but beleue; there is who prayes and speakes not, and there is too that speakes, who prayes not; if thou wilt pray, thou must open thy needs to God as thy Father, through Christ God-man as thy mediator, from God the holy Ghost, as the inditer of thy prayers: if thou wilt pray, thy heart must bee  
1. emptied of purposes of sinne: 2. broken: 3. purged from guile by faith; which faith must then worke, before thou beginnest; say with *David*, *I will call, and God will answer mee*; and when thou hast done, conclude, I haue spoken, and shall in due time and manner be answered; thus doe, and bee sure that thou neither begin nor end a lawfull petition (of such onely wee speake) before thou art aware, let faith enter thy sute, and end, and subscribe it, and thou prevailest.

Gen. 22.

Psal. 66. 18.

Psal. 86. 7.  
and the 36. 9.

Now to particulars.

*How findes the Angell Peter?* sure he cannot sleep this night, being vpon his life to morrow, and in all

*Peters Enlargement.*

II

all likelihood knowing of it by the Church, howsoever, not sure of life one day to an end, but like enough to bee sent for at an houres warning, as *John Baptists* head was. Notwithstanding all this, *Peter* sleepest as soundly as ever in his life, and wakes without terrour, whence was this, from corruption? no from naturall courage: no, when *Peter* was younger, and therefore naturally bolder, he was a dastard: whence then? consider the reasons before, and it will be found, that it was from special comfort and confidence in God, which comfort most attends prisons and persecutions: here see the strength of spirituall peace and comfort.

The Lord hath comforts for his children, that will quiet and support them in any feares & straits, his consolations will make a man sleepe without a bed; lye almost without a soule: They will make one bold in danger, quiet in trouble, lye in the iawes of death: *The ioy of the Lord is strong*, saith *Nehemiah*, strong indeed that will carry a man over all: *Peter* had a strong heart, that can thus sleepe, thus wake, that can looke vpon Chaines, vpon Prisons, vpon Tyrants, vpon Torments, vpon Angels (good and bad) and never breake his sleepe for the matter. *Pauls* ioyes were strong, that made him sing *Acts 16.* in the stockes: *Dauids* faith strong, that made him say, *I will lye downe and sleepe, I will not feare though ten thousand rise up against me*: those were strong & strange ioyes that supported *David* in all his feares, and made him say, *In the multitude of my thoughts thy comforts glad my soule*: Those strong that triumphed ouer, rackings, mockings, scourgings, &c. as

Doct. 2.

Nehc. 8.

Acts 16.

Psal. 13.

Psal. 94. 19.

*Peters Enlargement.*

in the eleventh to the Hebrewes.

1. Q. Whence  
these comforts

Resf. 1.

*Quest.* But whence comes their strength?

Because they bee Gods ioyes, the ioyes of the Spirit, derived immediatly from the fountaine, and things be purest and strongest there.

2. Because spirituall, for as spirits are more active and powerfull then Bodies, so spirituall things then bodily and naturall.

3. Those ioyes are most certaine and durable, these overcome and out-live all crosses, and all other comforts.

4. They are al-sufficient, and borrow no helpe from creatures: Nature and Art work with instruments, and by meanes, they cannot support without meate, strengthen without sleepe, glue sleepe without warmth, nor warmth without a bed, &c. But God can beyond meanes, without means work comfort, make one see in the darke, live in death.

2. Q. What.  
Answ. I.

*Quest.* But what be these comforts of God?

*Ans.* Precious promises applyed by God in due season, and brought home to the heart, which revive the spirits more then any balm, and these promises come thicke vpon Peter now. He thinketh, hath not God sayd, that the sighing of prisoners comes to him, that he bottles up all our teares, that wee should cast our care vpon him, and hee will care for vs, that in six and seven troubles they shall not come neare me, that in fire and water he will be with me, & did not I hear my Saviour say, Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, reade not I how David sayd, I will lie downe and sleepe, and therefore I will doe so too.

2. Strengthening graces, God poures the spirit  
of

of faith, patience, power, courage, into his, in due time; and they raile the heart, as wine the fainting spirits; every saving grace is healing, is strengthening.

3. Howrely experience of Gods care and providence; and a childe never sees the loue of his mother so much as when hee is sicke, so Gods children, &c.

Now that makes them pluck vp their feete with *Iacob*, and say with *Paul*, *I know whom I haue trusted;* and with the Church, *Thou wilt guide vs to death;* and after (as *David* addes) *receiue to glory.*

4. Speciall peace of conscience, and ioy of the holy Ghost, by new expressions of Gods favour, and ravishments of heaven: then God opens heaven, and they see their life and crowne, and so are carried over all.

*Quest.* When doth God thus comfort his?

3. Q. When.

*Ans.* When they most need it, as then the mother brings out her preserues, when the childe is sicke: first, when they be most humbled and empty of themselves; therefore after greatest humiliations come greatest consolations, as *David*, *Abraham*, and others ever found.

2. But specially in the day of tryall and persecution, the more the diuell bestirres him, the more God bestirres him: thus the sweetest nights that ever *Iacob* spent were in the field, and so for *Peter*; and when had *David* those large affections to rise at midnight, when was the Word so sweete, but when his troubles were bitter?

Gen. 28. and  
32. chap.

Psal. 119.

The vse is double, 1. get these comforts, we get

Vse.

*aque vite* ready against qualmes; Bezoar-stone, and cordials against fits: but the cordials that help all, is the holy Ghost, the Comforter; Art is blind, and often posed; Nature weak, and often foyled; (like a bow that must not bee drawne beyond compasse) onely grace and spirituall comfort is invincible: get this, and you may sleepe in a dungeon, live in the darke, want all, and yet haue all; want these, and a flea may breake your sleepe; and a hand writing dash your mirth in the midst of all friends.

Dan. 5.

2. Let such as haue spirituall hearts thus affected, stay themselues here; feare not poverty, there be comforts beyond the paine of famine; feare not sicknesse, there be comforts beyond all fits of sicknesse: feare not death, feare not chaines, feare not any thing that you can or shall suffer: Not any thing? why, a man is subiect to racking, to burning, &c. yet feare not, and why? the Lord hath comfort in all, and aboue all tribulations: when hee calls a *Saul* to a crowne, hee makes him another man: so when hee calls a man to a chaine, *Peter* is not the man in prison hee was out of prison; at the first hee was fearfull of a wenches word, after hee was willing, yet flesh hung backe, *John* the last Chapter, vers. 18. But when put vpon it, heare his voyce, see his face; he can be as quiet, as comfortable, as well in prison as ever.

A&amp; 5. 39. 4. 13

Ob.

Ans.

Ob.

Ans.

Ob. Oh but I finde my selfe afraid of words?

Ans. So was *Peter* at first.

Ob. Oh but, saith our Saviour, beware of men.

Ans. No man so malicious as God is mercifull, so perilous as God is pitifull. Oh but say wee liued where



Peters Enlargement.

795  
15

where we should lie in cold irons, in the darke, bee halfe pined, starved; who can beare these? *Peter* can, any can, when God calls them to it.

O but say we were put to the fiery tryall, flames are intolerable and mercilesse. O but flames are in Gods hands, *Daniel* 3. Chapter: againe, Martyrs haue had more comfort there, then in all their liues before. Oh but some of them haue cryed out of paines: And do not men so who die in their beds too? but God hath borne them through these, and made them amends.

O get then inward strength, and that will overcome all feares, all torments; conclude wee with that good Martyr, if God call ever any of his to any such sufferings, hee will either weaken the flame or strengthen their faith; hee hath promised (that, which let vs liue and die in; to wit) that hee will not tempt beyond strength: *And hee is able to doe exceeding abundantly aboue all that wee can speake or thinke.* <sup>2 Cor. 10.</sup>

Assure your selues, the feare of persecution is more then persecution it selfe; therefore I speake to your feares, for there is none (through Gods mercie) with vs I am sure to be felt (I thinke) to bee feared.

*The same night, &c.* That the Lord doth often *Doct. 3.* hold his people long in suspence, for those things which he meanes to giue them; hee is to our seeming slow, but sure; sure, but slow; thus hee was as good as his word to *Abraham*, hee gaue him a sonne, but hee held him off to the last houre; hee kept touch with his posterity, brought them out of Egypt.

Egypt, but he deferred it till the last day; his bond was almost forfeited, yet he paid it before the Sun-  
 set, *Exod. 12. 17. 41.* Thus *Ioseph* was long in pri-  
 son, yet at the appointed time brought forth; and  
*Israel* long in captivity, prayers were made, and yet  
*Daniel* could heare no answer till night was vpon  
 him; *Iacob* wrestles till day, &c. so also the woman  
 of Canaan, *Matt. 15.* and the Church here: in all  
 which places wee see, that God is mindfull of his  
 day. 2. That hee deferres sometime till the last  
 houre be running.

Psal. 105. 19.

Dan 9.

Reas.

The reason of this delay is manifold. 1. God  
 would turne our eyes backward, and make vs say;  
 O it is iust God should deferre me, I haue deferred  
 him; hee called and I would not heare; prayed mee  
 againe, againe, and againe, and I would not an-  
 swer; therefore it is equall I should call and cry,  
 and not be heard.

2. God hereby would sharpen our prayers for  
 the present, therefore hee seemes deafe, because we  
 should speake out; therefore slow, because we should  
 be earnest; thus *Daniel* interprets it: God deferres  
 him, this is (saith hee) but to try me, therefore hee  
 spits vpon his hands, and takes better hold; O Lord  
 forgiue, saith hee, O Lord heare, O Lord open, and  
 poures so many petitions, and arguments vpon  
 God, that there is no resistance; thus *Iacob*, he sees  
 the day comming vpon him, and he had made no-  
 thing of it all night, and therefore now he sets to it,  
*Goe*, saith hee, *I will not let thee goe without a bles-*  
*sing.*

3. Hereby hee prepares vs for the future recei-  
 uing

*Peters Enlargement.*

17

197

uing of his comforts; thus he humbles vs, thus he enlarges vs, thus fits vs for thankfulness, the more blessings cost vs, the better wee will praise them, and praise God for them: adde to this, that these repulses drive vs to further searches, as the Israelites at *At*, and *Gibeah*.

Ios. 7.  
Iudg. 20.

Doth the Lord thus long deferre sometime his intended comforts and answers? Let's know the courses of his providence, and wait vpon him: behold the husbandman waits; when he hath sowne his seed, hee doth not looke to reape and sow all in a day, his corne is first buried, yea it dies, yea it growes downward, before it comes vppward, and when it is vp, receiues many a snib and check, yet hee waites; And why? because hee hath experience: so must wee, when we haue sown our seed; say wee bury our prayers, say to our seeming they die, say they grow downward, backward, say all things seeme to be worse after prayer with vs then before, yet waite; why, we haue experience of our owne and others mens successe, never did men sow this seed, but they had a croppe, though a late harvest, yet a harvest.

*vs. 1.*

*Ob.* Oh but I haue prayed exceeding long.

*Ob.*

*Ans.* How long? *Isaack* prayed twenty yeeres for a childe, before he sped; *Abraham* thirty, before he sped; *Abrahams* posterity were foure hundred yeeres in captivity, before they were delivered; the Church thirsted for Christ, one thousand, two thousand, three thousand yeeres, before they had him: How many thousands, hundreds, scores of yeeres, hast thou waited?

*Ans.*

D

*Ob.*

*Peters Enlargement.*

*Ob.* O but I haue tryed all my friends, vsed all means, prayed my selfe, and got others to speake too, and yet no helpe?

*Ans.* And might not *Peter* say as much? not a Christian in *Ierusalem*, but had spoken, and spoken often, and yet he sickes.

*Ob.* O but matters with me are worse and worse, the more I pray against poverty, the poorer I am; the more I pray for patience, the worse I am; the more I pray for faith, the lesse I haue; the more I pray against passions and temptations, the more they flie in my face.

*Ans.* Is not this as wee said, that the corne must goe backward, before it come forward; was it not so with *Abraham* and *Sarah*, the longer they prayed the elder they waxed, and so vnfit for issue.

*Ob.* O but my sinnes grow stronger by prayer.

*Ans.* Not so, thou seelest it more then before; it is not because sinne is stronger, but thou sounder; againe, these motions of sinne, bee not motions of life, but symptoms of death; as the fowle struggles, and sprunts most when the head is off: the pangs of death be now vpon thy lusts, take comfort.

*Ob.* O but now your comforts come too late, the date is out for me.

*Ans.* Why? hath God said pray no more, as to *Jeremie*, hath hee stoppt thy mouth? so long as God saith, pray; so long as the spirit within thee saith, pray; so long as Gods people haue hearts to pray; neuer say it is too late to pray: If *Peter* bee out by midnight, or by day-breake, it is as well as if he had beene out a moneth before.

do

C

Ob:

*Peters Enlargement.*

19

*Ob.* O but delayes breakes the heart.*Ob.*

*Ans.* But note the end of delayes, they are never to deny or frustrate, but to fit, and to quicken: make these vses of delayes, and then if thy sute be not honest, never begin it; if it be, never leaue it: learne of husbandmen, when they pull downe a tree, or lift at some blocke, if they cannot stirre it, they call in helpe, if it come not at the first pull, they pull againe, if not then, ha, againe; if not then, ha, once more; at last they feele it coming, and then it comes amaine: learne of *Elijah*, hee prayed for raine, having prayed lookes about him, nothing comes; hee prayed againe, nothing comes; hee prayed againe, nothing comes; at length, O Master (saith his servant) I see a clowd, but it is but little; Is it a clowd? then once more to it, and by and by the heavens were masked with clowdes: learne of these men, *Peter* sickes in the dungeon, one lifts, he cannot stirre him; try you (saith hee) to a second, to a third, try a fourth, a fift; at length heaven stirres, the chaines stirre, and *Peter* comes in amongst them: learne of Christ himselfe; the widow dealt with a Iudge, not a Father; a bad Iudge, shee was alone, a simple Orator, yet she pre-uailes: learne of beggers, they haue no command, no promise, no acquaintance, no Art; and yet will stand it out; the master chides, the begger stands it out; the dame chides, hee stands still; the ser-uaunts come, and say they dare not serue him; the children say we must not, and yet he will not away. O Lord helpe our faith, how weake be wee, if ha-ving precept, promise, kindred, Gods seruants,

1 King. 18. 43.

Luke 18.

*Peters Enlargement.*

Gods Sonne on our sides, we will be put off with a delay: well (as I said) so long as a night, an houre, a minute, is left, pray; one night may compass that which an hundred before could not.

It followeth, *an Angel, &c.*

*Doff. 4.*

*1 Pet. 2.*

*Reas. 1.*

*Esa. 45.*

The Lord hath ever meanes at hand for his servants; comfort and deliverance, if set on worke; well might *Peter* say, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver his*, &c. hee is never at a stand, if they know how to pray, he knoweth how to comfort.

In himselfe hee is al-sufficient, infinite in wisdom, to invent meanes; in power, to act them; and if need be, to create more.

2. Hee is the Lord of Hosts, the Lord of every creature; if our worke lie in the Seas, hee is Lord of the Seas; if on the Land, hee is Lord there; if in Prison, he beareth the keyes of every Gaole; if heavens can help vs, he commands them; if winds, if beasts, if friends, if strangers, if foes, if Angels; the Lord hath the command of all persons, things, and places.

*Vse 1.*

*Psal. 37.*

For comfort, roule thy selfe vpon God, cast thy care vpon him, he will bring it to passe; is thy burden, poverty? cast it vpon him, and he will helpe it; is it sinne, feare, sorrow, whatsoever it bee, hee can beare it, and discharge thee.

Oh but I see no meanes, I owe so much, to many in my family, and no meanes.

This is as if they should haue said: If wee had a friend in the Court, to moue *Herod*; if a friend in the watch, to bribe him; if in the prison, to see him; then something might be done, but now all

meanes

This Sermon  
was made in  
the depth of  
the dearth.

*Peters Enlargement.*

21

meanes faile vs. No, no: God hath meanes beyond our sight, if men cannot do it, Angels can & shall: and if no man will pay the widowes debt, God will: if no body else will feede *Eliab*, the Ravens shall: what doe wee talke of meanes? all meanes are shut vp in God.

*3 King. 4.*

*Ob.* O but my case is desperate, it is not possible to helpe me.

*Ob.*

*Ans.* Now we shall have a tale of impossibilities: And why not possible; shall any thing be impossible to God?

*Ans.*

*Zach. 8. 6.*

*Ob.* O but there bee an hundred blockes in my way.

*Ob.*

*Ans.* But what is in his way, that makes his way through the seas, stones, wood, iron, &c? goe to the prison, there is a blocke, a guard; passe that guard, there is a blocke, a doore; passe the doore, there is another, a chaine; passe the chaine, there is another, an iron gate. O but what of this, if they can breake through all hinderances of vnbeliefe, discouragements, to prayer: God will breake thorow these and an thousand more, to their comfort. O but God workes no wonders now. No? his Name is wonderfull still; his power as great as ever, his wisdom as deepe as ever, his promises as good, his loue as much to his as ever, our need as much, our interest as great, our Saviour as good; all things stand as before: if wee can vse former meanes, wee shall finde former successe, and God will doe abundantly aboue all that wee can speake or thinke: wee haue the Lords promise for this, *Ephesians 3. 20. and Esay 42. 16. I will make darke*

*Ans.*

*Esa. 43. 16.*

Marke our Saviours collection from *Manna* to bread, *Mat. 4. Deut. 8. 3. Esa. 9. 6.*

D 3

*light,*



*Peters Enlargement.*

*light, and crookednesse bright: wee haue had our owne experience, let any man that hath had any acquaintance with God and this holy dute, tell me when prayers were not succesfull; when didst thou ever speake to thy heavenly Father, but he did answer thee with some ease, some comfort? When didst thou ever pray, but thy heart was thereby somewhat lightened? and if thou canst not but say with David, in the same day I asked, I was thus far answered, That my heart was strengthened, Psa. 138. 3. doe not faile to conclude with David, Though I walke in the midst of troubles, yet (vpon prayer) I shall bee revived, 7. and God will perfect his mercies in mee for ever, 8.*

Thus wee haue dispatcht some meditations: more wee haue, but they must be onely named; as  
1. Herod would, but could not bring forth Peter, to tryall and execution: men be but men, and must doe as they may; for what they would doe against the Church, nor they, nor all the Diuells in hell can doe.

2. The Lord can giue sleepe and peace in any place, at any time, in any company.

3. Gods best servants and messengers, are sometimes yoked with vilest offenders, &c.

4. Gods best creatures are the Churches servants: Angels.

5. Lastly, the Lord can quickly shake his out of their chaines, rags, feares, fetters, &c. But what do I meane thus to exceed: Brethren I would faine haue you more thirstie of your time, doe you not waste it (as others doe) in idle impertinencies,  
much



*Peters Enlargement.*

much lesse in surveying States and Kingdomes; It  
is not for vs to sit vpon Crownes and Thrones, and  
to turne Stateſmen; it is for vs to bee thankefull  
where God bleſſes, and to bee prayerfull when the  
Church labours; to this end I haue ſayde thus  
much to perſwade you to the praſtice of what  
you know, now your turne followes, lets  
ſee what will be done, and how well  
you will improue time, in ſpea-  
king to God; rather then  
to, or of, men.

*June 1686**FINIS.*

For the Kingdom

much shall in the Kingdom of Heaven be  
 it is for us to inherit Crowns and Thrones and  
 to be seated with him; it is for us to be seated with  
 the God of the Universe, and to be seated with him  
 in the Kingdom of Heaven; to this end I have written this  
 book to persuade you to the practice of what  
 you know, now your time will come  
 when you will be seated and how well  
 you will sit in the Kingdom of Heaven  
 King to God; rather than  
 to God of men.

37

11.1.13

11.1.13